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LIT 331.01: Major Authors: The Brontes

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LIT 331-01: The Brontës

Professor Harrison

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Office Hours: TuTh 3:30-4:30 & by appt.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Brontë, Anne. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. (Oxford World's Classics.)
- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre* 4th Ed. (Norton Critical Edition.)
- Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights* 4th Ed. (Norton Critical Edition.)
- Byron, Lord. *Manfred*. (broadview.)
- Hacker, Diane and Nancy Sommers. *A Pocket Style Manual* 6th Ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's.)
- Murfin, Ross C and Supryia M. Ray. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* 3rd
 - Ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's.)
- Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. (Norton Critical Edition.)
- Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto*. (Oxford World Classics.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

LIT 331 explores exemplary fictions by three remarkable siblings, Anne, Charlotte, and Emily Brontë. Like the Beatles in Hamburg, the Brontës underwent their apprenticeships as artists at a young age, reading Lord Byron and Gothic fiction and collaborating on cycles of Romantic poems and tales set in the imaginary realms of Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal. Building upon this foundation, and both deeply attuned to the social, cultural, economic, and political dilemmas of their era—especially the plight of women and children—and possessed of an almost uncanny grasp of (extreme) emotional and psychological states and an equally uncanny grasp of narrative technique, they produced within a span of a few years some of the greatest novels written in English. In order to get some sense of the writers and genres that influenced their masterpieces, the course begins with a reading of work by Horace Walpole and Lord Byron and then turns to *Jane Eyre* (1847), *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848). The class closes with Jean Rhys' famous reply to *Jane Eyre*, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). As the course proceeds, we'll also have opportunities to apply different critical theories to the primary texts and to read critical studies of the authors.

COURSE OUTCOMES (Adapted from the Department of English's 2010 Assessment Report)

1. Students will understand the major literary movements and genres that influenced the Brontës; students will also understand how the Brontës built upon and extended these traditions to fashion their own fictions and to explore their own era, themes, and concerns.
2. Students will have a detailed knowledge of the contributions of the Brontës to the novel in English.
3. Students will be introduced to the major historical, creative, and theoretical areas in Brontë Studies.
4. Students will be able—while drawing on appropriate critical terms and concepts—to state clearly the central themes, concepts, and ideas governing works of literature and then, as a separate but related act, to evaluate their literary importance and/or cultural significance.
4. Students will be able to engage thoughtfully with a range of critical and theoretical perspectives on literary and cultural (and even controversial) issues, including an ability to state clearly the assumptions and premises of their own position.
5. Students will be able to perform a literary close reading (both in class and in writing assignments), demonstrating an ability to interpret insightfully literary texts by thoughtfully integrating quoted passages into larger argumentative claims.
6. Students will be able to write clear, grammatically consistent, and rhetorically effective papers, driven by a thesis and sustained by an ordered, coherent argument or sequence of ideas.

GRADING

• Essay 1 (Proposal; 8-10+ pages):	30%
• Essay 2 (Proposal; 8-10+ pages):	30%
• Final Exam:	30%
• Participation:	10%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please note that you must complete all written work to pass LIT 331. You must, in other words, turn in both essays and take the final exam. Essays will be deducted ONE letter grade for EACH class period they are late.

Attendance Policy: Since the course involves informed discussions of the readings, attendance and participation are crucial: after THREE absences, your FINAL GRADE will be deducted ONE letter grade for each additional TWO absences.

DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Department Assessment: The Department of English's ongoing process of assessing its curriculum requires a committee of professors to read student papers to learn how students in general are progressing through the program. Thus, your professor may choose a copy of one of your papers or ask for an electronic version of it to use in this assessment process. (All identifying information—such as name or ID number—will be removed and no evaluation of student work outside the

boundaries of the course will play any role in determining a student's grade.) If you do not want your work used in such a way, please inform your professor and she or he will not forward it to the Assessment Committee. Otherwise, we appreciate your tacit consent.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism: the use of someone else's ideas or words as if they were your own. To avoid this contravention of the fundamental values of the academy, you must acknowledge, by citation of name, title, and page number, work that has influenced your thinking. The University's official warning can be found in the Student Conduct Code (Academic Conduct), available on the web.

Disability Accommodation: Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for coursework. To request accommodation, please contact the professor as soon as possible in the semester. For more information, visit the Disability Services website.

SYLLABUS

Tu Jan 23:	Introduction
Th Aug 25:	**Lecture: The Novel and The Gothic** **Essay 1 Assigned**
Tu Jan 30:	Walpole xxxiv-59 ¹
Th Feb 1:	Walpole 60-115
Tu Feb 6:	**Lecture: Byron and the Byronic Hero** Byron 9-62
Th Feb 8:	Charlotte photostat of original title page-70, 541-42
Tu Feb 13:	Charlotte 70-138
Th Feb 15:	Charlotte 138-98
Tu Feb 20:	Charlotte 198-266
Th Feb 22:	Charlotte 266-336
Tu Feb 27:	Charlotte 336-403
Th Mar 1:	Emily ix-49, 429-30
Tu Mar 6:	Emily 50-104 **Essay 2 Assigned**
Th Mar 8:	Emily 104-54

¹ Note: Never read the "Introduction" to any text until after you've read the work! (Unless told otherwise by your instructor, of course.) You should, however, take advantage of the explanatory notes either at the bottom of pages or at the back of the book: read them along with the primary text.

Tu Mar 13: Emily 154-212
Essay 1 Due
Th Mar 15: Emily 212-58

Tu Mar 20: Charlotte 461-505
Emily 357-79
Th Mar 22: Anne vi-vii, xxxvi-76

Tu Mar 27: **No Class:
Th Mar 29: Spring Break!**

Tu Apr 3: Anne 76-145
Th Apr 5: Anne 146-213

Tu Apr 10: Anne 214-86
Th Apr 12: Anne 287-356

Tu Apr 17: Anne 356-417
Th Apr 19: **Lecture: Postcolonial Studies**
Essay 2 Due

Tu Apr 24: Rhys vii-56
Th Apr 26: Rhys 56-112

Tu May 1: **Review for Final Exam**
Th May 3: **Review for Final Exam**